

Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 STATE 030358

61

ORIGIN AF-06

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMCONSUL JERUSALEM IMMEDIATE

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TOSEC 032

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS:

SUBJECT: SITUATION IN ETHIOPIA AS OF 1500 HOURS (EST)

FEBRUARY 10, 1975 SITREP NO. 17

QUOTE:

FIGHTING BROKE OUT AGAIN IN ASMARA AT 2200 LOCAL
FEBRUARY 10. AN ETHIOPIAN NAVY UNIT LOCATED IMMEDIATELY
NEXT TO THE CONSULTATE GENERAL WAS RECEIVING HEAVY SMALL
ARMS AND ROCKET FIRE AND INSURGENTS COULD BE SEEN IN
NEARBY STREETS. OTHER AREAS OF THE TOWN, SOME NEAR
USG INSTALLATIONS AND INCLUDING THE AIRPORT, WERE ALSO
REPORTED UNDER ATTACK. NO AMERICANS HAVE BEEN HARMED.

THIS NEW OUBREAK ENDED A LULL IN THE FIGHTING WHICH
FOLLOWED THE FIREFIGHT ON THE NIGHT OF FEB. 7-8, DURING
WHICH SOME AMERICAN INSTALLATIONS WERE LIGHTLY HIT.
IN THE MEANWHILE, THE ETHIOPIAN ARMY HAD REOCCUPIED
AN AREA NORTH OF THE CITY ON WHICH THE MUNICIPAL POWER
PLANT IS LOCATED; BUT THE PRESS NOW REPORTS THAT THESE
FORCES HAVE BEEN SURROUNDED BY THE INSURGENTS. ETHIOPIAN
AIRCRAFT ARE BOMBING TO THE NORTH OF ASMARA.

THERE HAS BEEN NO PROGRESS IN THE SUDANESE INITIATIVE

SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 02 STATE 030358

TOWARD A CEASE-FIRE. THE SUDANESE DELEGATION WHICH

ARRIVED IN ADDIS ABABA ON FEBRUARY 9 HAS NOT YET BEEN

RECEIVED BY THE ETHIOPIAN AUTHORITIES.

ON THE MORNING OF FEBRUARY 10 ETHIOPIAN SECURITY PERSONNEL ARRESTED AN ERITREAN EMPLOYEE OF THE VOICE OF AMERICA, VIOLATING THE IMMUNITY OF US DIPLOMATIC PREMISES IN THE PROCESS. THIS HAPPENED ONCE BEFORE ON DECEMBER 4 AND ONE OF THOSE ARRESTED ON THE PREVIOUS OCCASION IS STILL BEING HELD, ALTHOUGH NOT YET CHARGED. THE EMBASSY PROTESTED THE PRIOR INCIDENT AND WILL PROTEST THIS ONE. THE GOVERNMENT-OWNED ENGLISH-LANGUAGE ETHIOPIAN HERALD REPORTED ON FEBRUARY 9 THAT WESTERN NEWS MEDIA REPRESENTATIVES WERE NOT BEING ALLOWED TO GO TO ASMARA BECAUSE THEY WERE LIARS AND EXPRESSED THE OPINION THAT THEY SHOULD BE EXPELLED FROM THE COUNTRY.

THE ETHIOPIAN AMBASSADOR IN WASHINGTON (WHO IS ALSO FOREIGN MINISTER), HAS ASKED US, UNDER INSTRUCTION FROM HIS GOVERNMENT, TO AIRLIFT SMALL ARMS AMMUNITION INTO ETHIOPIA. WE ARE PRESENTLY IN TOUCH WITH OUR MILITARY ASSISTANCE ADVISORY MISSION (MAAG) IN ADDIS TO DETERMINE THE ETHIOPIAN ARMY'S EXACT NEEDS.
UNQUOTE

QUOTE --

SITUATION REPORT NO. 16 - SITUATION IN ETHIOPIA
AS OF 0600 HOURS (EST) FEBRUARY 10, 1975

IN ASMARA CONDITIONS CONTINUE TO IMPROVE. THERE WAS ONE FIRING INCIDENT HEARD DURING THE NIGHT, BUT THIS MORNING ALL IS QUIET AND MANY PEOPLE ARE OUT ON THE STREETS.

THE ASMARA WATER SITUATION IS COMING BACK TO NORMAL, WITH MOST OF THE WATER SUPPLY RESTORED TO OUR KAGNEW INSTALLATIONS.

SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 03 STATE 030358

THE COMMANDING OFFICER OF THE SECOND DIVISION REPORTED THAT FOUR FUEL TRUCKS ARRIVED IN ASMARA FROM MASSAWA YESTERDAY AND THAT MORE ARE EXPECTED TODAY. HE ADDED THAT THE ASMARA CITY POWER PLANT HAD ONLY MINOR DAMAGE.

EVACUATION FLIGHTS ARE CONTINUING FROM THE ASMARA AIRPORT, WHICH REMAINS CLOSED TO NORMAL TRAFFIC. UNQUOTE INGERSOLL

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